

RE

TWISTED

TALES

\$1.50

\$2.00 CANADA

No. 8

RECOMMENDED FOR MATURE READERS



WAY DOWN THERE

BELOW IN THE DARK

DARK...

SEB LIVED IN THE SEWER. HE HAD LIVED THERE ALL THE YEARS OF HIS LIFE. HOW EVER LONG THAT WAS, SEB DID NOT KNOW HE COULD NOT COUNT. HE COULD NOT SPEAK. HE COULD NOT REALLY FEEL ANY. IN THE ORDINARY SENSE OF THE WORD.

HE WAS ALONE AND BLIND AND THE ONLY ONE OF HIS SPECIES. WHATEVER THAT SPECIES WAS...HE EXISTED IN THE SEWER. THAT WAS ALL.

SEB ATE GARBAGE. THERE WAS ALWAYS AN ABSENCE OF IT. SOMETIMES WHEN HE WAS LUCKY OR WHEN HE HAPPEDED ON A RICK CUE. HE ATE RATS. HE ATE THEIR SKIN AND SOMETIMES HALF-A-LIVE. MOSTLY HE SLEPT.

HE WAS CONTENT ENOUGH

SLEEPING OCCUPIED SEVENTY PER CENT OF HIS LIFE. FORAGING THE OTHER THIRTY. HE HAD NO ENEMIES. THE SEWER WAS VERY OLD AND VERY DEEP AND HE KNEW ALL THE PLACES TO HIDE. IF THERE HAD BEEN ENEMIES BUT THERE WERE NONE.

LIFE WAS A CEMENT MACHINE...

GERALD?

SPLASH

SMOOSH



WHAT'D I TELL YOU ABOUT DRINKING FROM MY GLASS BECAUSE?



WE DON'T DRINK OUT OF OTHER PEOPLE'S GLASSES - I'VE TOLD YOU THAT!

SHUT UP! PLEASE... DON'T! HE'S DEAD!



HAVEN'T I?



HE CAN'T HEAR YOU!

HE DOESN'T KNOW ANY BETTER

LOOK AT YOU! GROVELING ON THE FLOOR BECAUSE YOUR PATHETIC SON! THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH HIM! WILLARD! HE'S MERELY DISOBEYANT!



HE'S A GOOD A GOOD BOY

NO, WILLARD, HE'S A VERY WICKED LITTLE BOY... BUT HE WILL LEARN... HE WILL LEARN...



I'D LIKE MY TOAST NOW, WILLARD... WILLARD?

THOUGH TOTALLY BLIND SINCE BIRTH—WHEN EVER THAT WAS—SEB'S SENSE OF SMOKE WAS ACUTE. HE COULD FEEL THE FALUTE SOUNDS OF A ROACH WALKING ALONG THE OVERN CEILING.

IT WAS THIS ~~EXTRAORDINARY~~ ABILITY TO HEAR THAT ALLOWED SEB TO SURVIVE DOWN HERE IN THE DARKNESS AND SLIME. NO SOUND ESCAPED THOSE RIDICULOUS EARS, WHETHER THAT OF APPROACHING ROACH OR—~~APPROACHING~~ ~~SHADOWS~~!



HE COULD HEAR THE FAR AWAY MOORE OF A CRAP FIRES MAKING A CRISP MUFFLING SOUND ON THE PAVEMENT ROOF ABOVE HIS HEAD...



THERE WERE ~~ACCUSATIONS~~ IN SEB'S HOME—NOT MANY, BUT ENOUGH TO KEEP HIM VIGILANT. THEY WERE THE DISCARDED PROPERTY OF IMPULSIVE YOUNG BOYS, EXPECTED BIRTHDAY PRESENTS FLUSHED DOWN CONVENIENT TOILETS...



...HERE IN SEB'S WORLD THEY ~~GO~~!

SEB HAD KILLED PERHAPS A HALF DOZEN OF THEM. ALWAYS, INEVITABLY THEY TOOK A LITTLE OF HIS STRANGE, MEMORANDUM SELF WITH THEM... SEB DIDN'T MIND...

WITHIN TWO TO SIX DAYS, AN ~~EXTRAORDINARY~~ THING HAPPENED TO SEB'S DELICIOUS TAIL...!

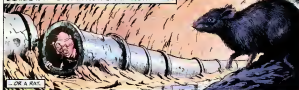


...IT ALWAYS CRAWL BACK...





WHEN HE WASN'T SLEEPING OR EATING, SSG SOMETIMES LIED TO PLAY A GAME. IT WAS HIS VERY OWN GAME AND HE HAD INVENTED IT ALL BY HIMSELF. FIRST HE WOULD JUST SIT VERY QUIETLY IN A CORNER... THEN HE WOULD WAIT FOR SOME CREATURE TO HAPPEN BY: MAYBE A ROACH, MAYBE A WATERBUG...



...OR A RAT.

WHEN HE HEARD THE CREATURE COMING, SSG WOULD CONCENTRATE ON IT WITH ALL HIS MIGHT, JAWING, SHUT HIS HISS EYES AND GIVING IT ALL HIS ATTENTION...

AND IF HE WORKED AT IT ALONG ENOUGH, A STRANGE THING WOULD HAPPEN... HE WOULD SOMEHOW STRENGTHEN INTO THE CREATURE'S BRAIN...



SORT OF ABSORB IT'S MIND, WHAT LITTLE MIND IT HAD...

ONCE A BUTTERFLY HAD DRIFTED INTO THE BENCH AND SSG HAD ENTERED ITS MINISCULE MIND AND HAD FLAPPED AND FLUTTERED AND DIPPED AND THOUGHT-FOR A BRIEF TIME-BUTTERFLY THOUGHTS...

HE HAD FORGED INSIDE THE INSECT'S MIND UNTIL IT HAD LEFT THE BENCH AND FLOWN OUTSIDE HIGH ABOVE THE BUSH CITY AND SSG HAD SEEN ALL THE MONUMENTS, COLORFUL, LOOPY, STRANGE, HAUNTING SIGHTS BELOW THROUGH THE BUTTERFLY'S EYES...



THEN THE LITTLE BUTTERFLY HAD FLOWN TOO FAR AWAY AND SSG WAS BACK IN THE DARKNESS AND DRARKNESS WITH THE SOUNDS OF SCUTTLEING VERMIN AND THE TRICKLING OF CESS WATER...







BUT HE FOUND NOTHING THERE BUT THE SOFTNESS AND WETNESS AND A BLACKNESS DEEPER EVEN THAN HIS OWN BLINDNESS... SO HE LET THE THING WASH AWAY...

WHEN HE FIRST SEACHED THE SMALL, SOFT OBJECT TUMBLING AND SLIPPING ALONG IN THE CURRENT, BOB SAT DOWN AND CONCENTRATED ON IT AND TRIED TO GET ABOVE ITS WIND...



GOAW! HE'S GONE!
LOOK, THE WINDOW'S OPEN!

HIS RUN AWAY, ELLER!
I KNOW HE WOULD! I
WARNED YOU!



I'LL CALL THE POLICE--

DON'T YOU WORRY! I WON'T HAVE
THE ASSASSINATION!

WE CAN HANDLE OUR OWN AFFAIRS
C'MON, I KNOW WHERE THE LITTLE
BOY IS GONE.



MSSSSSS



SEE LISTENED QUIETLY THIS NEW CREATURE WAS **DISGUSTING** RAPIDLY WAS **SHOULD ANGRY** THOUGH **FEAR**, EXHALATING FROM IT. SEE WONDERED IF HE SHOULD **EAT** THE NEW CREATURE...

PERHAPS... BUT IT MIGHT BE INTERESTING TO **DEEP** INSURE THE CREATURE'S **MIND** FIRST... YES. SEE THOUGHT, HE MIGHT **TRY** THAT...





THE SEWER WATER LIFTED HIM UP AND WASHED HIM ALONG ON A BUBBLING RIDE...HE PASSED THROUGH FAMILIAR TUNNELS AND PIPES AND SOME NOT SO FAMILIAR...

TOWARD DAWN HE EMERGED OUT OF A BIG PIPE INTO A CEMENT TRENCH. IT WAS RAINING OUTSIDE...SSS MIXED WITH THE RAINWATER AND ROLLED ON...

SSS FELT HIMSELF PULLED FROM ONE CULVERT TO THE NEXT, THEN SLIGHTLY SUREPPLY IN THE WILD CURRENT OF A WIDE, WINDING ARROYO...

THE RIVER OVERFLOWED ITS BANKS AT ONE POINT. SSS FLOWED WITH IT...SOMETIME LATER HE FOUND HIMSELF SWIRLING QUIETLY IN A GENTLE TIDE POOL...

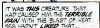
SSS FLOATED...THE SUN CAME UP AND BEAT WARMLY ON HIS SURFACE, THEN WENT DOWN AGAIN, AND HE SENSED THE BRIGHT STARS OVERHEAD...HE DRIFTED LADLY TOWARD A WIDE BAY, FELT HIMSELF FILTERED THROUGH A NARROW GRATINGS...

...THERE WAS THE DISTANT RUMBLE OF HEAVY MACHINERY...

THEN ONCE MORE HE WAS IN A PIPE...A NARROW PIPE...A CLEAN, SHINY ALUMINUM PIPE...AND HE WAS MOVING VERY FAST...RUSHING...

RUSHING, RUSHING AHEADWARD...





MIDNIGHT GODS

A limited edition portfolio by John Pound



Midnight Gods is a full-color suite of inspired fantasy paintings rendered in the painstaking **John Pound** manner. Each of these six interior plates is faithfully reproduced in full color. A collector's item, suitable for framing. Pound's earlier portfolio releases are sold out and command premium prices. This new release tops them all. Six interior plates in a gold-embossed presentation folder. Signed, numbered, limited-edition of only 1,200 copies. **\$35.00**



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First Impressions

IT WAS ON THE OCCASION OF THE "BOTH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR GRADUATION FROM OXFORD COLLEGE THAT CHILDS FIRST RELATED THE STORY. I HAD PUT UPON THE POLURITY OF REMINDING ALL MY DEAREST COLLEAGUES, FROM THOSE AUGUSTUS DAVIS AND A NUMBER OF MY COUNTRYMEN, IT WAS A 400-ACRE SITE AS IT TURNED OUT, AND A RESOUNDING SUCCESS. ALL THE MORE SO BECAUSE CHILDS WAS THE ONLY MEMBER OF OUR LITTLE CIRCLE I HADNT BEEN ABLE TO CONTACT. BUT HE MANAGED TO FIND THE PLACE, AND THE SAME WE WERE ALL SO EXCITED AND GLAD TO SEE HIM (NONE OF US HAD BEEN TO OXFORD SINCE UNIVERSITY) THAT WE SCARCELY NOTICED, UPON HIS ENTRANCE, A VERY OLD, GRAY, AND OBVIOUSLY ANGRY LORD.

CHILDS: BY HEAVEN, THIS IS SPLENDID! COME IN, OLD MAN, AND JOIN THE PARTY! YOU REMEMBER ALDRIS, STRAUSS, MARLEY, AND BISHOPMAN, HELL, HAVE A COGNAC! (TO BOBBI) FIDDLE, LET'S HAVE A DRINK FOR MR. CHILDS!

OLD MAN: THIS SAVORY? WHAT COULD BE MORE SAVORABLE THAN TO BE SURROUNDED BY THE SINCERITY AND MODERATION OF GOOD THOUGHT, OR CLOUTIER, THAT'S THE KEY, ON IT, GENTLEMEN, TRUST, HOW EASY A COMMODITY IN TODAY'S TRANSPARENT WORLD!

VERY GOOD, SIR.



Story: BRUCE JONES Art: BUTCH GUICE
Lettering: CODY Color: TOM LUTH





"I WAS YOUNG... I WAS FOOLISH... I WAS MOTIVATED BEYOND MEASURE. I TOOK A JOB AS A GROOMSMAN IN A LOCAL PUB WHILE MY HATED FATHER DIED AWAY."

"THEN... MONTHS LATER, I RESOLVED TO DO THAT WHICH I HAVE SPENT THESE PAST DECADES REGRETTING... TO DESecRATE HARKLEY'S GRAVE."

"IT WAS A FULL MOON... I FOUND THE COFFIN EASILY."





"I WAS EXAMINING THE BEAUTIFULLY WEIGHTED GOLD COIN IN THE MOONLIGHT WHEN I FIRST FELT THAT TERRIBLE BEARING DOWN IN MY ANGLE."



"THE COIN WAS MORE OR LESS 1 FOOT DIAMETERLY AT THE MIGHTY EATEN MOUTH, BUT THE COUGH YELLOW BITE OF THE THING HELD FAST..."



"THE MORE I STRUGGLED WITH THE DRIVING WOODROW, THE FIGHTER TACKLE RESEMBLED THE THING BIT INTO MY AGONIZED FLESH."





"THE BLOWN BLOW ME OF THE
FOUL... SMELLING BODY, BUT
NOT, ALAS, THE HEAD..."

"THE ARM!
OH GOD,
THE ARM!"



"QUICKLY I LEARNED THAT
AS LONG AS I DID NOT
ATTEMPT TO REMOVE THE
HEAD, THE PAIN WAS
BEARABLE. I FINALLY
COVERED THE GROUND
AWAY AND GOT THE
PLACE..."



"I HURRIED TO MY FLAT
WHERE, THOUGH I TOLD
MYSELF I MANAGED TO
REMOVE ALL BUT THE
CLUTCHING MASS...
WHEN I ATTEMPTED TO
PULL, THESE FREE, THE
THING BE TO LOOSELY
AND THE PAIN MADE ME
PASS OUT..."



"THEN SOMETHING CAME TO
MIND: THE WATCH AT 2701!
HAD THE WATCH...PERHAPS
THE CREATURE COULD BE
APPARED IF I BOUGHT
THE WATCH...PERHAPS
THE CREATURE COULD BE
APPARED IF I BOUGHT
THE WATCH...PERHAPS
THE CREATURE COULD BE
APPARED IF I BOUGHT
THE WATCH..."



"IMAGINE MY HORROR WHEN, UPON
PICKING THE FOLLOWING MORNING
I FOUND THE DANGEROUS INSTRUMENT
HAD FINALLY STOP MY BECOMING
TABLE..."

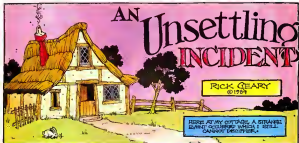
"NO!"

"EACH TIME I ATTEMPTED TO RID MYSELF OF THE CURSED
THING IT REAPPEARED SOON AFTER, NOR WAS MY LUCK
AT REMOVING THE CLUTCHING TENDRIL ANY GREATER. I
COULD NOT CONTACT A SURGEON NOR FROM THE POLICE
MIGHT TRACE HARKLEY'S RENTAL RECORDS..."

"I HAD TO DRINK, WANDERING FROM ONE FLU-RAVING
JOB TO THE NEXT, EVERY STEP A LANCING TORTURE
A REMINDER OF THAT HELLISH NIGHT IN THE GARDEN
YARD. THE YEARS PASSED: THE WATCH AND BIRTH
REMAINED..."







AT THIS MOMENT, ST. MARK
TOOK A CURIOUS INTEREST.



I THEN CLIMBED TO
THE PEAK OF MY ROOF.



AND FOR THOSE MOMENTS
POURED — I WAS NOT ALONE.



THE SCENERY BEHIND OUR
HEADQUARTERS.



MY MIND AND HER EYES
WERE OBVIOUSLY REPELLED.



THEIR INTERESTS CALLED
TO BRIDGE ME. . .



AS DID THOSE OF OTHER
PASSING TRAVELERS.



AT LAST, I CALLED MYSELF
LADY. . .



THE END OF MY PRESENT.



THREE LADIES, I OBSERVED
MY FAMILIAR AREA. . .



AND WITH IT WAS ADOPTED
MY WIFE AND HER COUSIN.



THIS MEANT AS I COULD TELL
WAS AN AREA OF THE PAST.



I THEN PUT THEM IN THE
COTTON HAT AND IT APPEARED.



I, HOWEVER, BEING, AND
RECOGNIZING SUCH BEHAVIOR.



MANY THINGS BEHIND ME, A
THAT OF MYSELF.



I AM, THEREFORE, NOT A LITTLE
ABLE TO EXPLAIN MY ACTIONS.

The Art of Rowena



A DYNAMIC PORTFOLIO BY ROWENA MORRILL

A new full-color portfolio release from the most in-demand paperback cover artist today. Rowena Morrill's beautiful paintings have won her a legion of fans. Here she's selected six of her very finest works, that are being published as pure art for the first time. Rowena is perhaps best known for her stunning interpretations of sensuous women in fantasy settings. The portfolio is in the same 9" x 12 1/2" format as *Stormbringer* and *Gods and Goddesses*. Rowena has created a new painting that is reproduced as the cover art.

Artist profile and photo included. A signed, numbered, limited-edition of only 2,000 copies, packaged in a mylar® snug.

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Suitable for framing!



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Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.

WILLIAM F. NOLAN'S

THE PARTY

DAVID BARTLEY ASHLAND, AGE 40, HEIR TO HIS FATHER'S FORTUNE WANDERLUST, BITTY, TOTALLY OCCUPIED WITH THE GOOD LIFE. PRESENTLY MARRIED TO LINDA BLAINE ASHLAND, 35, FORMER MODEL AND FASHION EDITOR—NOW A FRUSTRATED SOCIAL CRAWLER ON THE LATTER OF WEALTH...

CONGRATULATIONS DAVID AS USUAL YOU MANAGED TO MAKE A TOTAL FOOL OF YOURSELF

I WAS BEING FUNNY I'M ALWAYS FUNNY AT PARTIES

DO YOU ACTUALLY THINK IT'S **FUNNY** TO BEAT A MURDER SCUM ALL OVER THE HOSTESS?

SPILLING THE BEER WAS AN ACCIDENT I WAS TRYING TO CLIMB UP ON THE FLOOR TO GIVE

YOUR SPICES ARE VULGAR AND DISGUSTING

I'LL TELL YOU WHAT WAS VULGAR AND DISGUSTING—THE WAY YOU WENT AFTER THAT OLIVE PLAYER

I USED TO FIND AMOROUS SOMEBODY'S NOT KISSING YOU DON'T SURPRISE ME

YOU BET WHAT YOU GIVE OUT IN THIS WORLD SWEETS AND YOU'RE A NIGHTY OLD FISH



Story WILLIAM F. NOLAN Art MIKE HOFFMAN
Letters CARRIE MCCARTHY Color JOE CHIDDO







AREN'T YOU COMING?

NO - I'M GOING TO MY SISTER'S WEDDING OR DOWNTOWN. I JUST DON'T FEEL LIKE GOING INSIDE THAT HOUSE WITH YOU TONIGHT.



SIMONY WILL BRING YOU THE CAR AFTER HE'S DROPPED ME OFF.

BUT YOURSELF, I'M GOING IN AND HAVE A DRINK.



HOW AMBERLE HAVE I HEARD THAT LIKE BEFORE?



SOMETIME LATER...

WHAT IS IT, BOUGHT WHAT IS THAT?



HE'S ASKING YOU TO JOIN HER...

JOIN HER? TO AFTER THREE IN THE MORNING.



David ~
Please forgive me for my
wretched behavior tonight. I
didn't really mean what I
said to you. Guess I just had
too much to drink.
I'm sending back Sidney
to fetch you to this
marvelous party I discovered.
You'll adore it!

See you there,
daddy!
L.



WELL, WHAT THE HELL...
I'VE NEVER TURNED DOWN
ONE YET! I'LL GET MY
COAT.

—IT'S A NEW APARTMENT BUILDING DOWNTOWN. THAT'S ALL I CAN TELL YOU. BUT YAS ASHLAND WANTED TO SURPRISE YOU.

YOU'RE BEING VERY HYPERBOLIC BRUNY.

—BUT I'M LEAVING EARLY FOR A SURPRISE DRIVE ON. INTERUP.

WHERE'S THE PARTY? WHAT FLOOR?

—I'M NOT HAVING A GOOD TIME. ARE ASHLAND.

APT 10-F



MR. BELLA CHIRIN IN JOIN THE PARTY.







WHO WILL?

THE GERMANS. THEY FORM GROUPS AROUND PEOPLE. IF YOU DON'T KEEP MOVING THEY GANG UP ON YOU. FORM A GERV-CLIQUE. BILLIONS OF \$M. THEY CAN CAUSE FLU. EVER HAD THE FLU?



AT LEAST YOU'VE BEEN WARNED.

SOME PEOPLE NEVER LEARN...



HER NAME'S BABY... SHE USED TO RUB HER HEAD AGAINST YOUR NECK. HOPE YOU'RE NOT AFRAID OF SNAKES.



I, UH... CAN'T SAY EXACTLY I'M PROUD OF THEM...

SHE'S REALLY VERY LOVELY. WANT TO HOLD HER?



NO... NO THANKS...



LIGHT?



YOU BEER ALONE.

NO... MY WIFE'S SOMEWHERE...

I HAVEN'T BEEN ALONE SINCE MIDDLEAGE. I WAS ABOUT IN OR SOMETHING AND THIS CREEPY WOMAN IN WITH ME. MY PARENTS WERE DEAD THEN.







Dragons II



SUITABLE FOR FRAMING

Lela Dowling's first limited edition portfolio was *Dragons*, published in 1979. She has followed up with two more triumphant releases, *Unicorns* and *Unicorns II*. Now we are treated to *Dragons II*. This is a gorgeous full color portfolio, printed in the same large size (11 1/2 x 16") as the earlier releases. There are six new interior pieces in an illustrated two color folder. The portfolio is packaged in a mylar® snug. Each of the numbered, limited edition copies (3,000) have been signed by Lela Dowling.

\$20.00

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Dark Suns of Gruaga

A PORTFOLIO by Alex Nino

A Visual Odyssey.



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Ten huge plates in a presentation folder.

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